

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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TAGS: PFOR, XC, US
SUBJECT: AUGUST 23 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. IN REPLY TO QUESTION AT WEDS. NEWS CONFERENCE, PRES. AGAIN DEFENDS SECRET CAMBODIAN RAIDS AS NECESSARY TO SAVE US LIVES AND SHORTEN WAR (NYT; SUN).

2. MOST PAPERS REPORT US RESTITUTION FOR ERRONEOUS B-52 BOMBING OF NEAK LUONG; REPAIR AND OUTFITTING HOSPITAL AND COMPENSATION TO VICTIMS AND FAMILIES ESTIMATED AT \$150,000 (PHINQ; CHITRIB; NYDN, UPI; WP). AP (SUN) INCORRECTLY GIVES TOTAL TO REBUILD AND EQUIP HOSPITAL AS \$1.1 MILLION. BROWNE (NYT) REPORTS THAT AMB. SWANK SIGNS AGREEMENT TO GIVE RELATIVES OF DEAD EQUIVALENT OF \$400 EACH, TO PAY ABOUT \$26,000 FOR HOSPITAL REPAIR AND TO PROVIDE HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT WORTH \$71,000. EQUIPMENT IS PRE-PACKAGED DISASTER UNIT TO EQUIP 200-BED FIELD HOSPITAL. TWO THOUSAND SUCH UNITS, ORIGINALLY ASSEMBLED IN EVENT OF NUCLEAR ATTACK ON US NOW SURPLUS; DOOLEY FOUNDATION SEEKS 10 FROM DOD FOR USE IN CAMBODIAN REFUGEE CENTERS, BUT WILL RECEIVE ONLY 2, SINCE US STATE AND CITY

GOVTS HAVE HIGHER PRIORITY. DOD ALSO REFUSED LEND CAMBODIA MEDICAL UNIT SELF-CONTAINED TRANSPORTABLE HOSPITAL THAT DOOLEY FOUNDATION PROPOSES TO STAFF WITH VOLUNTEERS; FOUNDATION PRES. QUOTES PP MISSION THAT CAMBODIANS MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO SOLVE OWN PROBLEMS.

3. THIRTY-SIX THAI NEWSMEN VISIT PP AS GKR GUESTS ON GROUNDS THAT OTHER FOREIGN JOURNALISTS FAIL REPORT EVENTS ACCURATELY. AT CONFERENCES WITH THEM AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS - AT WHICH ONLY KHMER AND THAI SPOKE - GKR MADE CLEAR IT WOULD SEEK HELP FROM RTG AND GVN, WELL AS US, IF SITUATION WORSENS (NYT). FANK COMMANDER SAYS US MAY BE ASKED UNCLASSIFIED

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RESUME BOMBING UNLESS VC AND NVA LEAVE CAMBODIA IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARIS AGREEMENT (NYDN). PP FRONT RELATIVELY QUIET, BUT FIGHTING CONTINUES AT KOMPONG CHAM AND KOMPONG SPEU (CHITRIB). HANOI SAYS KI WIPED OUT 36,000 FANK FROM JULY 1 TO AUG. 15, ALSO DESTROYED 85 AIRCRAFT, 364 MILITARY VEHICLES, 91 WAR VESSELS, 9 BRIDGES AND SEIZED 13,000 GUNS (REUTER, NYT).

4. LIPPMAN (WP) REPORTS THAT PROSPECTS FOR EARLY PEACE IN LAOS FADE FOLLOWING MONDAY'S COUP ATTEMPT. TALKS STALLED ON SEVERAL POINTS BEFORE; PL NOW LESS WILLING TO COMPROMISE AND RIGHTIST MILITARY REPORTEDLY WARNS SOUVANNA AGAINST MORE CONCESSIONS. PL ACCUSE RTG AND US OF BACKING COUP ATTEMPT. THEY NOW DEMAND MORE TROOPS IN VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG, PL SHARE OF CONTROL OVER AIRPORTS AND BORDER POLICE, AND BAN ON RLG MILITARY FLIGHTS OVER VIENTIANE AND LUANG PRABANG. SHIPER (NYT) SAYS PL BRANDS COUP TRY AS ATTEMPT TO SABOTAGE NEGOTIATIONS, AND URGES RLG TO SIGN PEACE AGREEMENT ON ITS TERMS. PL DENOUNCES US AS BEHIND COUP ATTEMPT; SOME DIPLOMATS BELIEVE PL HEARTENED BY ARMED FORCES STANDING BY SOUVANNA DURING ATTEMPT. PEAGAM (CSM) REPORTS RLG LEADERS WARY OF CHANGES IN US POLICY. US CIVILIAN PRESENCE IN VIENTIANE ON WAY DOWN AND MILITARY REDUCTIONS MAY FOLLOW. MANY VIENTIANE GENERALS FEEL BETRAYED AND BITTER, BUT REMAINING LOYAL TO SOUVANNA MAY INDICATE ACQUIESCENCE IN COALITION GOVT.

5. FIVE EUROPEAN NEWSMEN, INCLUDING AFP SAIGON CHIEF AND GERMAN TELEVISION CORRESPONDENT AND CAMERA CREW, REPORTEDLY DETAINED BY VC 35 MI N. OF SAIGON (WP, AP; NYT, REUTER).

6. VC ATTACK GVN RANGER POSITION IN 7-1/2 HR. BATTLE N. OF PLEIKU CITY THAT KILLED 89 VC AND 17 ARVN. VC ALSO ATTACK W AND NW OF KONTUM. GVN REPORTS 76 TRUCE VIOLATIONS PAST 24 HOURS UNCLASSIFIED

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(NYT, AP WP, PHINQ). AMBUSH OF GVN MILITIA PATROL SIX MILES FROM SAIGON KILLS ONE, WOUNDS FIVE. ARVN ADMITS RANGERS FOUGHT BATTLE WITH INSURGENTS TWO MILES INSIDE CAMBODIA WITH HEAVY CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES (PHINQ). GEN. "BIG" MINH SAYS HE FAVORS NEUTRALIZATION OF ALL SEA; IS LATER CASTIGATED BY GVN RADIO FOR STATEMENT (WP).

7. GVN CLAIMS THAT IN DEFIANCE OF C-F AGREEMENT NVA HAS MOVED 60 SAM-2 MISSILES 430 TANKS, 180 FIELD GUNS AND AT LEAST FIVE A-A REGIMENTS INTO KHE SANH AND A-SHAU VALLEY AREA; TRUCE VIOLATIONS BY NVA AND VC TOTAL OVER 52,000 SINCE JAN. 28 WITH 1300 CIVILIANS KILLED, 3500 WOUNDED AND 1400 MISSING OR ABDUCTED. HANOI RECENTLY SENT 2000 BRIDES FROM WOMAN-SURPLUS

NVN FOR ITS TROOPS STATIONED IN SVN TO "RAISE RICE, MANIOC AND BABIES" (PHINQ, UPI).

THAILAND

8. THANOM TELLS WEEKLY NEWS CONFERENCE THAT NEGOTS ON REDUCTION OF US FORCES IN THAILAND WILL BEGIN FRIDAY. TALKS WILL DEAL WITH GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL, WITH DUE REGARD FOR SEA SECURITY; GEN KRIANGSAK WILL HEAD THAI DELEGATION (REUTER, NYT). PM SAYS US MAY BEGIN PARTIAL PULLOUT FROM THAILAND WITHIN NEXT 10 DAYS, NOW THAT INDOCHINA AIR WAR HAS ENDED (UPI WP, NYDN). THANOM SAYS RTG AUTHORITIES SEARCH FOR RIGHT-WING LAOTIAN REBELS WHO FLED BACK TO THAILAND AFTER COUP ATTEMPT FAILED (PHINQ).

CHINA

9. DURDIN (NYT), IN HONG KONG, REPORTS OFFICIAL US SOURCES THERE ESTIMATE US TRADE WITH PRC THIS YEAR WILL REACH \$900 MILLION, POSSIBLY MORE, PUSHING US TO SECOND PLACE, AFTER JAPAN, ON CHINA TRADERS LIST. "REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE" WILL RESULT MAINLY FROM EXTRAORDINARY CHINESE ORDERS FOR US GRAIN, COTTON, AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

10. NYT DISPATCH CITES KREMLIN DECREE THAT HAS JUST COME TO LIGHT, DESIGNED IN PART TO SETTLE MORE SOVIET FARMERS UNCLASSIFIED

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IN AGRICULTURAL LANDS ALONG CHINA BORDER, APPARENTLY TO AFFIRM RUSSIAN CLAIMS TO BOUNDARY REGIONS. SOME OF THESE AREAS WERE SEIZED IN 19TH CENTURY UNDER WHAT PEKING CONTENTS WERE UNEQUAL TREATIES IMPOSED BY CZARIST EMPIRE ON WEAK CHINA (CHITRIB).

11. RCA ANNOUNCES ITS COLOR TV SETS WILL BE SOLD FOR FIRST TIME IN EAST ASIA STARTING NEXT MONTH THROUGH NEWLY-APPOINTED DISTRIBUTOR ON TAIWAN, WHICH HAS ALREADY RECEIVED SHIPMENT FOR SALE IN ROC (NYT; JOC, FULLER).

12. EX-IM BANK EXTENDS \$4.1 MILLION LOAN TO TAIWAN CEMENT FIRM TO HELP FINANCE PURCHASES OF US CEMENT PLANT EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES (JOC).

13. HONG KONG FISHERMEN SEEK HELP OF PRC TO OPPOSE PROPOSED OIL REFINERY AT ONE OF COLONY'S OFFSHORE ISLANDS (JOC).

JAPAN

14. INFORMAL US-JAPAN EXCHANGE UNDER WAY FOR DEVELOPMENT

OF SOLAR ENERGY AND SYNTHETIC GAS. "CLEAN" ENERGY DEVELOPMENT URGENT FOR JAPAN IN LIGHT OF DETERIORATING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION AND INCREASING RESISTANCE TO CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR PLANTS FROM "NUCLEAR ALLERGIC" RESIDENTS, GOJ TRADE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN SAYS (REUTER,CHITRIB).

15. WORLD ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CO. OF JAPAN APPLIES TO ECUADOR FOR PERMISSION TO PROSPECT OIL CONCESSION JOINTLY WITH SUN OIL CO. (AP, NYT). FIRST JAPANESE FACTORY IN MALTA TO BEGIN OPERATION IN DECEMBER, WILL EMPLOY ABOUT 350 MALTESE (JOC).

16. UN AMB. SAITO SAYS JAPAN FAVORS MAINTAINING UNC IN SK; IN MEETING WITH UN CORRESPONDENTS ASSN., SAYS UNC IS VITAL FOR JAPAN'S SECURITY (UPI, WP).

KOREA

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17. NK EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO TARGET OF HOMEMADE BOMBS THAT CAUSE SOME DAMAGE, NO INJURIES (AP PHINQ, SUN).

PHILIPPINES

18. MARCOS ORDERS MILITARY TO SPEED UP NEGOTS FOR PEACEFUL SURRENDER OF REBELS IN SOUTHERN PHILS WHO HAVE EXPRESSED DESIRE TO SURRENDER AND START NEW LIFE (UPI, WP).

19. GOP DETAINS 36 JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES FOR NOT REGISTERING TO VOTE IN JULY REFERENDUM, AND MANY MORE MAY BE PENALIZED. WITNESSES' SPOKESMAN INSISTS ANY FAILURE TO REGISTER WAS IN REALM OF "PERSONAL CONSCIENCE," RATHER THAN WILFUL DISRESPECT (NYT).

EA STEEL SHORTAGE

20. AP REGIONAL SURVEY SHOWS SOARING PRICES AND SHRINKING SUPPLIES OF STEEL PLAGUING DEVELOPING EA COUNTRIES. COSTS OF CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS - PORTION OF WHICH ARE FINANCED BY FOREIGN AID FUNDS - ARE SPIRALING. IN SOME CASES, PROJECTS ARE BEING CURTAILED OR POSTPONED AND IN OTHER INSTANCES COST OVERRUNS ARE PUTTING ADDITIONAL BURDENS ON LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS. SITUATION REPORTED STEMMING FROM US CONTROLS ON STEEL SCRAP EXPORTS AND INCREASING RELUCTANCE BY MAJOR STEEL PRODUCT EXPORTING NATIONS, PRINCIPALLY JAPAN, TO EXPAND SHIPMENTS FULLY TO MEET OVERSEAS DEMAND (NYT).

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

21. S-N (AUG. 22) FEELS UNHAPPINESS OF RIGHT-WING GENERALS WHO ATTEMPTED LAOTIAN COUP IS "UNDERSTANDABLE" IN VIEW OF THE TERMS OF NEARLY CONCLUDED ACCORD. SAYS SOUVANNA'S CHOICE WAS TO MAKE MAJOR CONCESSIONS TO PL OR FLEE ACROSS MEKONG, AND NOTES THAT EVEN WITH SUPPORT OF US BOMBERS, THAI TROOP ASSISTANCE, AND AID OF VANG PAO'S CIA-LED "CLANDESTINE ARMY," RLG FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO SURVIVE. THAT MOST RIGHT-WING GENERALS UNDERSTAND THIS WAS ILLUSTRATED BY FACT NO RLA UNITS WENT OVER TO THAO MALED INSURGENTS. UNCLASSIFIED

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WITH NEW CLIMATE OF WORLD DETENTE, SOUVANNA MAY BE ABLE TO PRESIDE OVER SETTLEMENT WHICH WILL BRING LAOS MEASURE OF PEACE. CERTAINLY, RUMP RIGHTWING REGIME, WITHOUT INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT, COULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED FOR LONG.

22. S-N'S BRADSHAW (AUG. 22), IN HONG KONG, NOTES RUMORS OF CCP CONGRESS TO CHOOSE NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP, BUT SEES NO CUSTOMARY PREPARATORY STEPS NOW BEING TAKEN TO HOLD CONGRESS THUS FAR. EFFORTS BY SOME, PRESUMABLY CHOU SUPPORTERS, TO CALL CONGRESS AND STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION WITHIN LEADERSHIP SEEM TO HAVE TRIGGERED MAOIST COUNTERATTACK BY RADICALS THROUGH CHINESE NEWSPAPERS. ARTICLES ARE VEILED ATTACKS AGAINST CHOU'S PRAGMATIC POLICIES, WHICH ARE REGARDED AS DEVIATIONS FROM MAO PRECEPTS. PEOPLE'S DAILY ARTICLES OF AUG. 11 AND 13 RUN TO 14 NUMBER OF ITEMS PUBLISHED IN PEKING BEGINNING JULY 30 WHICH APPEAR TO BE ATTACKS ON NEW LINEUP OF PRESUMED DEVIATIONISTS AND REVISIONISTS; FULL-SCALE ATTACK BEGAN AUG. 6 WITH SEVEN BLASTS THAT WEEK. MOST RECENT DISCERNIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO MAOIST OFFENSIVE CAME SATURDAY WITH THREE ARTICLES CELEBRATING 7TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BIG RED GUARD RALLY IN PEKING DURING GPCR. THIS WAS PART OF RECENT EFFORT TO REVIVE AND PRAISE MAO'S PAST MAJOR POLICY INTERVENTIONS. SITUATION NOW DEVELOPING INTO WHAT MAY BECOME LONG, DRAWN-OUT BATTLE OVER FUTURE POLICIES AND PERSONALITIES.

23. CHARLES YOST (CSM) SAYS WITH END OF BOMBING IN CAMBODIA, US MAY HOPE ITS TRAGEDY IN INDOCHINA HAS FINISHED. CONTINUED STERN WARNINGS FROM PRESIDENT AND DOD TO HANOI THAT A NEW OFFENSIVE IN VIETNAM WILL BE MET WITH RESUMED BOMBING SHOULD TEMPER OUR OPTIMISM ABOUT THE END OF US MILITARY INVOLVEMENT.

SAYS STEADY REDUCTION OF US MILITARY IN THAILAND, KOREA, AND THE PHILIPPINES IS IN US INTEREST AS WELL AS THEIRS. EACH OF THESE NATIONS IS ALREADY WELL EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH ANY EXTERNAL ATTACK AT ALL LIKELY TO OCCUR. HANDLING INTERNAL OPPOSITION
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DEPENDS ON THEMSELVES NOT THE US.

24. ACCORDING TO ISAACS (SUN, HK), MOST CHINA WATCHING IS STILL CARRIED ON OUTSIDE ITS BORDERS. WORK OF THE US CONGEN HK HAS HARDLY BEEN CHANGED BY ESTABLISHMENT OF USLO PEKING. NOTES THAT HK DIPLOMATS HAVE WIDER AND SWIFTER ACCESS TO MANY KINDS OF CHINESE SOURCE MATERIALS, MORE NUMBERS AND MORE TECHNICAL RESOURCES.

25. CHARLOTTE SAIKOWSKI (CSM) SEES WIDENING SOVIET POLICY OF DETENTE IN ASIA AS WELL AS EUROPE, AS REFLECTED IN ROK PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES IN MOSCOW, PENDING DISCUSSION OF PEACE TREATY WITH JAPAN DURING PM TANAKA'S FALL VISIT TO MOSCOW, BORDER PACT WITH CHINA, AND BILATERAL TREATIES WITH W. GERMANY. THE RUSSIANS ARE ITEMIZING PRINCIPLES LIKE REUNIFICATION OF FORCE, NONINTERFERENCE IN ONE ANOTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, AND MUTUAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION; AND MOST RECENTLY, TENETS OF NON-ANNEXATION OF FOREIGN TERRITORIES AND THE RIGHT OF OWNERSHIP OF NATURAL RESOURCES. THE SOVIET STRATEGY IS CONJECTURED TO BE A WAY OF BLOCKING NEW SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS THAT WOULD EXCLUDE THEM, SUCH AS A REJUVENATED SEATO OR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ASEAN INTO A SECURITY PACT. ON A BROADER PLANE, IT WILL REDUCE CONFLICTS, POSSIBILITIES OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS, AND HELP MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO.

26. CLAYTON FRITCHEY (WP) SAYS THAT SENATOR ROBERT BYRD'S TIMELY PROPOSAL TO DISASSOCIATE THE US FROM ITS "DELINQUENT STEPCHILD," SEATO, CAN RENDER A REAL PUBLIC SERVICE BY SHOWING HOW THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WERE DECEIVED INTO THINKING THAT SEATO IMPOSED ON THEM A SACRED COMMITMENT TO FIGHT IN INDOCHINA; FURTHER, THAT QUESTION OUGHT TO BE CLEARLY SETTLED SO THAT IT CAN NEVER BE EXPLOITED AGAIN. ASSERTS THAT NEW LIFE FOR SEATO WOULD MEAN ADDITIONAL BURDENS FOR US TAXPAYERS AND ADMINISTRATION JUSTIFICATION KFOR CONTINUED BOMBING IN THAILAND, WHICH IS THE KEY TO ANY RENEWED US WAR ACTIVITY IN THE INDOCHINESE
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THEATER.

27. BOB WIEDRICH (CHITRIB) REPORTS THAT STOPPING GOLDEN TRIANGLE DRUG TRAFFIC IS LIKE TRYING TO PLUG A SIEVE: CIA ENERGIES ARE CONCENTRATED TOWARD NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING WHICH DILUTES ITS ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT, LOW-PAID LAOTIANS HAVE LIVED IN A CULTURE THAT HASN'T OPPOSED DRUGS, THE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING TRAILS AND THE HAZARDS OF THE TRAILS (WILD ANIMALS, TRIGGER-HAPPY INSURGENTS); AND "RED CHINESE" WHO DON'T TOLERATE INTERFERENCE IN WHAT IS LABELED FOREIGN AID TO THE PATHET LAO; AND THE FEUDAL POWER WIELDED BY THE MILITARY WHICH INHIBITS LAOTIAN POLICE EFFORTS. RUSH

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